REMARKS

Claims 35-51 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-6, 11, 13-16, 32 and 34 have been cancelled without prejudice to the filing of one of more divisional applications.

Claims 39-51 have been added. Support for these new claims can be found throughout the specification and in the original claims as filed. More specifically, support for claims 39-51 can be found in cancelled claims 2-6, 11, 13-16, 32 and 34, respectively. Further, support for claim 44 can also be found in cancelled claims 7 and 11. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesy of the telephone interview granted to Applicants' undersigned attorney and Lynda Calderone on June 25, 2002. The telephone interview was initiated by the undersigned for the purpose of correcting Paper No. 19, which set forth a restriction requirement in a final Office Action. During the interview, the Examiner acknowledged that the restriction requirement should have been set-forth in a non-final Office Action and that the final Office Action was therefore sent in error. The interview was documented in an Interview Summary form PTO-413 (Paper No. 20) dated June 25, 2002, which indicates that Paper No. 19 is now a non-final Office Action.

In Paper No. 19, the Examiner has required restriction between claims 1-6, 11, 13-16 and 34 (Group I) which are drawn to an interactive system having an anticoagulant substance coupled to a linker, allegedly classified in class 436, subclass 69; and claims 35-38 (Group II), which are drawn to an interactive system having a physiologically active substance, i.e. protein, synthetic nickel-nitrilotriacetic acid coupled to the linker, allegedly classified in class 435, subclass 6. Applicants note that the Examiner did not expressly require restriction of claim 32 to either Group I or Group II. However, Applicants submit that claim 32 should be properly cast with Group I and request the Examiner correct the record accordingly.

The Examiner takes the position that the inventions of Groups I and II are independent and distinct alleging that the inventions have different modes of operation, different functions and different effects in that the substance coupled to the linker in the interactive system of Group I is an anticoagulant and substance coupled to the linker in the interactive system of

Group II is a physiologically active substance, i.e. protein, nucleic acid, and synthetic nickel-nitrilotroacetic acid (NiNTA). The Examiner concludes that Groups I and II encompass distinct and separate structural and functional requirements for evaluation of patentability and, therefore, there is no reason to expect searches for Groups I and II to be coextensive.

Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's bases for restriction and believe that the Examiner would not be unduly burdened by examining all claims involving the interactive system simultaneously, particularly at this late stage in the prosecution. However, in an effort to move prosecution of the application forward on the merits, Applicants hereby elect in response to the written restriction requirement, without traverse, the claims of Group II drawn to drawn an interactive system having a physiologically active substance, i.e. protein, synthetic nickel-nitrilotriacetic acid coupled to a linker (claims 35-38 and the new dependent claims).

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned on any questions which might arise at the telephone number indicated below. Reconsideration, and early examination and allowance of all of the claims are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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